



Title: George Penman – An Appreciation

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George Penman – Jazz band leader and bass player – An appreciation
Born 1939 – Died 18th September 2009

Jazz and dance aficionados all over Scotland will be familiar with the George Penman sound. Easy listening, irresistible to dance to, George Penman's band has entertained millions of Scots over the last 50 years.

George hailed from Rutherglen, and started his first band in 1959 with a regular gig in Lenzie. He always modestly claimed that his role as band leader emerged because he was 'the only one with a phone and a car' at the time.

While many Scots musicians of the time were targeting careers in London, George was determined to base his musical career in Glasgow. Not that London was strange territory; he won a recording contract with Parlophone in 1962 and took his band to the famous Abbey Road Studios in London to record a single featuring the now famous Scottish entertainer, Alastair McDonald, singing at the first of his many recordings. Significantly, other famous Parlophone artists of the time, the Beatles, took centre stage and moved George's beloved trad jazz out of the pop charts.

Undaunted, he proceeded to enthral Scots jazz fans from then until his recent health enforced retirement with his unique, easily recognised brand of music. He appeared on countless radio and TV shows from 1961 until 2009. Glaswegians will have many happy memories of his performances at St Andrews Halls, Shawfield Stadium, Eglinton Arms Hotel, Café Source and many other venues.

Over the last 50 years, bands and musical tastes have come and gone. It is a tribute to George that he is held in highest regard not only by the many musicians he played with, but by the most successful British jazz performers like Kenny Ball and Chris Barber, for his achievement of being the only Scottish band leader to maintain a working band throughout this 50 year period.

George is survived by his wife Joan, and his two sons and a daughter from a previous marriage.

Lennie Herd